orders within the broad norms laid down by it. However, occasional delays are not ruled out.

(c) In the process of handling over 300 million registered letters in a year, approximately 20,000 complaints are received which pertain to non-receipt of Acknowledgement Cards. These represent a small percentage of the total registered traffic.

(d) PIN coded Inter-metro letter mails are normally delivered within 48 hours. However, occasional delays are not ruled out, which are primarily because of (a) seasonal fluctuations in traffic (b) Staff complements not being commensurate with the volume of work and (c) transport disruptions.

(e) Speed Post is a fast service at a higher tariff, among specified stations. Its introduction has not affected the ordinary mail service. To improve the efficiency of the ordinary mail service further, Department has:

(a) Introduced a special priortisation for mail of specified nature between specified stations.
(b) automated mail processing in Bombay.
(c) made special facilitation centres for business mail of large volumes.
(d) refined mail processing and transmission systems.
(e) modernised lodgement services by use of computerised counter machines.
(f) provided identifiable Acknowledgement Cards to prevent loss in course of transmission.

Deterioration in Telephone Services

2399. SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to news-item which appeared in the 'Nav Bharat Times' dated the 16th February, 1995 under the caption "Zara dekhiye, aap ka phone so to nahin gaya hai";

(b) if so, what are the problems raised therein;

(c) whether it is a fact that the services rendered by MTNL to Delhi telephone subscribers in respect of fault repairs, payment of telephone bills, etc. have deteriorated considerably;

(d) whether Government are aware that the officers are generally *not* available to subscribers on telephones in their offices, as well as residences, because their telephones are kept engaged;

(e) whether any discussion have been held with the officers to sort out the problems faced by Delhi telephone subscribers and if so, the decisions arrived at; and

(f) whether Government have ever conducted surprise checks on the problems faced by subscribers, during the last three years; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, it highlights certain problems like delayed rectification of faults, inconvenience in payment of telephone bills etc.

(c) No Sir, the services rendered by MTNL are satisfactory. However, continuous efforts are being made to improve the service further.

(d) No Sir, all Officers under MTNL have specific instructions that the telephones must be answered. However at times the telephones may be genuinely busy.

(e) Yes, regular management meetings are held and problems of subscribers are being sorted out.

(f) Surprise checks are conducted from time to time and as a result, action has

been initiated/taken against 226 non-gazetted employees and 55 gazetted emplolyees, on account of their unsatisfactory performance.

एस०टी०डी० कॉल के लिए लाइन मिलने की बहुत लम्बे समय तक प्रतीक्षा किया जाना

2400. **श्री राघवजी:** क्या संचार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) इस बात के क्या कारण है कि मध्यान्ह पश्चात् 7 बजे से मध्यान्ह पश्चात् 10 बजे के बीच उपभोक्ता को देश के प्रमुख नगरों में एस० टी०डी० काल के लिए लाइन मिलने की बहुत लम्बे समय तक प्रतीक्षा करनी पड़ती है; और

(ख) मंत्रालय द्वारा इस समस्या के निराकरण के लिए क्या कार्यवाही की जा रही है?

संचार मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री सुखराम): (क) इस अवधि के दौरान शुल्क दर में रियायत प्रदान किए जाने के कारण परियात अधिक होता है। मौजूदा एस टी डी नेटवर्क की क्षमता इतनी नहीं है कि परियात को बढ़ती मांग को पूरा किया जा सके जिससे अधिक संकुलन (कन्जेशयन) हो जाता है और कालें नहीं मिल पाती।

(ख) बढ़ते एस टी डी परियात के लिए एस टी डी नेटवर्क को बढ़ाया जा रहा है।

Telephones in Rural and Urban Areas

2401. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of telephone availability in the urban and rural areas, State-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that most of the telephones installed in rural areas are out of order; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken or to be taken by Government *to* restore them to working order?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) The status as on 31-1-1995 is attached as Statement. *(See* below)

(b) and (c) No, Sir. There is a system of daily testing of rural telephones from trunk centres of telephone exchanges. The faults detected are immediately reported to the sectional official/officer incharge for taking corrective action,

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of the Circle	Number of Telephone Connections as on 31-1-1995		
		Urban	Rural	Total
1.	Andhra Pradesh	494688	106262	600950
2.	Assam	70438	13243	83681
3.	Bihar	182526	43352	225878
4.	Gujarat	551460	161605	713065
5.	Haryana	186965	38319	225284
6.	Himachal Pradesh	36673	33029	69702
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	38428	5182	43610
8.	Karnataka	471330	121235	592565